

Los Angeles Department of City Planning

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2008-3350-HCM

HEARING DATE: October 30, 2008
TIME: 10:00 AM
PLACE: City Hall, Room 350
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA
90012

Location: 400 Block of Pullman Avenue
Council District: 14
Community Plan Area: Northeast Los Angeles
Area Planning Commission: East Los Angeles
Neighborhood Council: Arroyo Seco
Legal Description: Pullman Street southerly of
Block 21 of Highland Park Addition and northerly
of Blocks A and F of the Pasadena Villa Tract

PROJECT: Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the
HERMON CAR WALL

REQUEST: Declare the property a Historic-Cultural Monument

APPLICANT: Arroyo Park Neighborhood Council
140 S. Avenue 57
Los Angeles, CA 90042

OWNER: City of Los Angeles

RECOMMENDATION **That the Cultural Heritage Commission:**

1. **Not declare** the property a Historic-Cultural Monument per Los Angeles Administrative Code Chapter 9, Division 22, Article 1, Section 22.171.7
2. **Adopt** the report findings.

S. GAIL GOLDBERG, AICP
Director of Planning
[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Ken Bernstein, AICP, Manager
Office of Historic Resources

Prepared by:
[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Edgar Garcia, Preservation Planner
Office of Historic Resources

Attachments: December 30, 2007 Historic-Cultural Monument Application

SUMMARY

Constructed in 1932-1940s and located in the Hermon area, this undulating retaining wall of varying height is a creative work of folk art. The structure is located on a section of Pullman Street in a hilly and vegetated setting. Materials used to construct the retaining wall include automobile parts, from engine crankcases to wooden spoke wheels, local bricks, and non-indigenous stones. The curved, central section is the highest portion of the wall and is topped with four wooden spoke wheels from the 1920s. Various engine and transmission parts from Model T's and other early GM cars are embedded within the lower levels of the wall. The structure also contains bricks from a school demolished after the Long Beach earthquake and other items collected from trips to the desert and other locations.

The proposed Hermon Car Wall monument was built by Albert Emmanuel Sederquist. With his nephews' help, Sederquist built the retaining wall over a period of ten years, serving to protect Sederquist's property as well as celebrate the early years of "America's love affair with the automobile". Sederquist was a car enthusiast, owning about six cars and working for both the LA Traffic Bureau and the Carmichael Traffic Corporation while living in Los Angeles.

Roots, erosion, and deterioration have damaged some of the lower parts of the wall, causing some of the artifacts to come loose. Most of the ejected parts have been stored by neighbors.

CRITERIA

The criterion is the Cultural Heritage Ordinance which defines a historical or cultural monument as any site (including significant trees or other plant life located thereon) building or structure of particular historic or cultural significance to the City of Los Angeles, such as historic structures or sites in which the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, State or community is reflected or exemplified, or which are identified with historic personages or with important events in the main currents of national, State or local history or which embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period style or method of construction, or a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual genius influenced his age.

FINDINGS

The written nomination argues that the property meets one of the specified Historic-Cultural Monument criteria: "embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period style or method of construction.

Based on a site inspection of the subject property on October 16, 2008, staff found that the retaining wall structure is badly damaged and deteriorated by cracks and collapses caused by structural failure to support the adjacent hillside. Large pieces of the wall have tumbled and dislodged the decorative elements added by the original builders. The current condition of the subject structure compromises its integrity and ability to convey its possible eligibility as a Monument.

Possible restoration or rehabilitation work using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards in conjunction with further research on the builder and history of the subject structure may allow for the Hermon Car Wall to meet criteria for Historic-Cultural Monument status. The staff of the Office of Historic Resources is available to provide assistance in this capacity regarding possible rehabilitation work or resubmittal for HCM designation.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting of August 21, 2008, the Cultural Heritage Commission voted to take the application under consideration. On October 16, 2008, the Cultural Heritage Commission toured the subject property.

**Hermon Car Wall
Staff Inspection Tour
Conducted on October 16, 2008**





Los Angeles Department of City Planning

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2008-3350-HCM

HEARING DATE: August 21, 2008
TIME: 10:00 AM
PLACE: City Hall, Room 1010
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA
90012

Location: 400 Block of Pullman Avenue
Council District: 14
Community Plan Area: Northeast Los Angeles
Area Planning Commission: East Los Angeles
Neighborhood Council: Arroyo Seco
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REQUEST: Declare the property a Historic-Cultural Monument

APPLICANT: Arroyo Park Neighborhood Council
140 S. Avenue 57
Los Angeles, CA 90042

OWNER: City of Los Angeles

RECOMMENDATION That the Cultural Heritage Commission:

1. **Take the property under consideration** as a Historic-Cultural Monument per Los Angeles Administrative Code Chapter 9, Division 22, Article 1, Section 22.171.10 because the application and accompanying photo documentation suggest the submittal may warrant further investigation.
2. **Adopt** the report findings.

S. GAIL GOLDBERG, AICP
Director of Planning
[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Ken Bernstein, Manager
Office of Historic Resources

Lambert M. Giessinger, Preservation Architect
Office of Historic Resources

Prepared by:
[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Edgar Garcia, Preservation Planner
Office of Historic Resources

Attachments: December 30, 2007 Historic-Cultural Monument Application
ZIMAS Report

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FINDINGS

Based on the facts set forth in the summary and application, the Commission determines that the application is complete and that the property may be significant enough to warrant further investigation as a potential Historic-Cultural Monument.

HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT APPLICATION

TYPE OR PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL BLOCK LETTERS

IDENTIFICATION

1. NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT HERMON CAR WALL
2. STREET ADDRESS 400 BLOCK OF PULLMAN AVENUE
CITY LOS ANGELES ZIP CODE 90042 COUNCIL DISTRICT 14
ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NO. PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY BOUNDED BY ASSESSOR'S MAPS IN BOOKS 5301, PAGE 5 AND 5302, PAGES 6 AND 7
3. COMPLETE LEGAL DESCRIPTION: TRACT PULLMAN STREET LYING SOUTHERLY OF BLOCK 21 OF HIGHLAND PARK ADDITION AND NORTHERLY OF BLOCKS A AND F OF THE PASADENA VILLA TRACT, BETWEEN MONTEREY ROAD TO THE EAST AND BUSHNELL WAY TO THE WEST, IN THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA AS PER MAPS FILED IN BOOK 2, PAGES 69 AND 70 OF MAPS AND BOOK 3, PAGES 5 THROUGH 8, INCLUSIVE OF MAPS, IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY.
BLOCK N/A Lot(s) N/A ARB. NO. N/A
RANGE OF ADDRESSES ON PROPERTY 400 THROUGH 450 AND 401 THROUGH 449 PULLMAN STREET
4. PRESENT OWNER CITY OF LOS ANGELES
STREET ADDRESS 200 N. SPRING STREET
CITY LOS ANGELES STATE CA ZIP CODE 90012 PHONE (213)
OWNER IS: PRIVATE _____ PUBLIC X
5. PRESENT USE RETAINING WALL ORIGINAL USE RETAINING WALL

DESCRIPTION

6. ARCHITECTURAL STYLE FOLK ART
7. STATE PRESENT PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE OR STRUCTURE (SEE OPTIONAL DESCRIPTION WORKSHEET)
(SEE DESCRIPTION WORKSHEET)

HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT APPLICATION

NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT HERMON CAR WALL

10. CONSTRUCTION DATE: FACTUAL _____ ESTIMATED 1932 & 1942
11. ARCHITECT, DESIGNER, OR ENGINEER: ALBERT EMMANUEL SEDERQUIST
12. CONTRACTOR OR OTHER BUILDER: SAME
13. DATES OF ENCLOSED PHOTOGRAPHS MARCH 21, 2006
14. CONDITION: EXCELLENT GOOD FAIR DETERIORATED NO LONGER IN EXISTENCE
15. ALTERATIONS: SEVERAL SMALLER PORTIONS HAVE FALLEN DOWN DURING RECENT RAINS AND THE CAR PARTS HAVE BEEN STORED BY NEIGHBORS IN ANTICIPATION OF LAND-MARKING AND SUBSEQUENT REPAIRS..
16. THREATS TO SITE NONE KNOWN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT VANDALISM PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT DETERIORATION
17. IS THE STRUCTURE ON ITS ORIGINAL SITE MOVED UNKNOWN

SIGNIFICANCE

18. BRIEFLY STATE HISTORICAL AND/OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE; INCLUDE DATES, EVENTS, AND PERSONS ASSOCIATED WITH SITE (SEE OPTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE WORKSHEET) THE HERMON CAR WALL WAS CONSTRUCTED BETWEEN ABOUT 1932 AND THE BEGINNING OF WORLD WAR II BY ALBERT EMMANUEL SEDERQUIST, WHO WAS A CLERK FOR THE LA TRAFFIC BUREAU AND LATER AS A SHIPPING CLERK FOR THE CARMICHAEL TRAFFIC CORPORATION ON MAIN STREET. HE ARRIVED IN LOS ANGELES IN 1926, AFTER LIVING AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS, SUCH AS HIS NATIVE IOWA, OAKLAND AND CHICAGO. A LIFE-LONG BACHELOR, HE LIVED AT THE CADILLAC HOTEL ON SOUTH MAIN STREET OF MANY YEARS. IN THE EARLY 1930S, HE PURCHASED SOME LAND WEST OF MONTEREY ROAD IN THE HERMON AREA OF LOS ANGELES, ALONG THE EDGE OF WHAT IS NOW DEBS PARK. SEDERQUIST, WHO HAD SEVERAL OLD CARS AND MORE PARTS, DECIDED TO BUILD A RETAINING WALL TO PROTECT HIS PROPERTY AND PROCEEDED TO DO SO WITH THE AID OF THREE YOUNG NEPHEWS, WHO HELPED HIM TO BUILD THE WALL, USING OLD CAR PARTS AS A DECORATIVE ELEMENT IN THE FACE OF THE WALL. THE WALL ALSO CONTAINED BRICKS FROM A SCHOOL DEMOLISHED AFTER THE LONG BEACH EARTHQUAKE AND OTHER ITEMS THAT HE COLLECTED ON TRIPS TO THE DESERT AND OTHER LOCATIONS. THE WALL TOOK ABOUT 10 YEARS TO BUILD. HE USED THE LAND THAT HE OWNED FOR CAMPING AND AS A GETAWAY. IT WAS EVENTUALLY SOLD FOR TAXES AFTER HIS DEATH.
19. SOURCES (LIST BOOKS, DOCUMENTS, SURVEYS, PERSONAL INTERVIEWS WITH DATES) BIOGRAPHY OF ALBERT SEDERQUIST FROM INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY HIS NEPHEW, WALTER SEDERQUIST OF MODESTO, CA. (ATTACHED), LA COUNTY ASSESSORS RECORDS, RECORDED DEEDS, US CENSUS RECORDS AND HISTORY OF PAGE COUNTY IOWA ON THE SEDERQUIST FAMILY.
20. DATE FORM PREPARED DECEMBER 30, 2007 PREPARER'S NAME CHARLES J. FISHER
ORGANIZATION ARROYO SECO NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL STREET ADDRESS 140 S. AVENUE 57
CITY HIGHLAND PARK STATE CA ZIP CODE 90042 PHONE (323) 256-3593
E-MAIL ADDRESS: ARROYOSECO@HOTMAIL.COM

DESCRIPTION WORK SHEET

TYPE OR PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL BLOCK LETTERS

THE HERMON CAR WALL IS A N/A STORY,

NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT

NUMBER OF STORIES

FOLK ART, UNDULATING PLAN RETAINING WALL

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE (SEE LINE 8 ABOVE)

PLAN SHAPE (SEE CHART)

STRUCTURE USE (RESIDENCE, ETC)

WITH A CONCRETE AND BRICK FINISH AND AUTOMOTIVE PARTS TRIM.

MATERIAL (WOOD SIDING, WOOD SHINGLES, BRICK, STUCCO, ETC)

MATERIAL (WOOD, METAL, ETC.)

ITS N/A ROOF IS N/A, N/A,

ROOF SHAPE (SEE CHART)

MATERIAL (CLAY TILE, ASPHALT OR WOOD SHINGLES)

WINDOW MATERIAL

1910S THROUGH 1920S CAR PARTS SET IN CONCRETE ARE PART OF THE DESIGN.

WINDOW TYPE (DOUBLE HUNG (SLIDES UP & DOWN), CASEMENT (OPENS OUT), HORIZONTAL SLIDING, ETC)

THE ENTRY FEATURES A N/A

DOOR LOCATION (RECESSED, CENTERED, OFF-CENTER, CORNER, ETC.)

WITH A N/A DOOR. ADDITIONAL CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

ENTRY DOOR STYLE (SEE CHART)

OF THE STRUCTURE ARE AN UNDULATING RETAINING WALL OF VARYING HEIGHT, THE CONCRETE STRUCTURE HAS

IDENTIFY ORIGINAL FEATURES SUCH AS PORCHES (SEE CHART); BALCONIES; NUMBER AND SHAPE OF DORMERS (SEE CHART);

VARIOUS AUTOMOBILE PARTS, RANGING FROM ENGINE CRANKCASES TO WOODEN SPOKE WHEELS SET INTO THE SIDE

NUMBER AND LOCATION OF CHIMNEYS; SHUTTERS; SECONDARY FINISH MATERIALS; PARAPETS; METAL TRIM; DECORATIVE TILE OR CAST STONE; ARCHES;

OF THE WALL, IN ADDITION TO BRICKS AND NON-INDIGENOUS STONES. THE CURVED CENTRAL SECTION IS TOPPED

ORNAMENTAL WOODWORK; SYMMETRY OR ASYMMETRY; CORNICES; FRIEZES; TOWERS OR TURRETS; BAY WINDOWS; HALFTIMBERING; HORIZONTALITY;

WITH FOUR WOODEN SPOKE WHEELS OF 1920S VINTAGE, WITH VARIOUS ENGINE AND TRANSMISSION PARTS FROM

VERTICALITY; FORMALITY OR INFORMALITY; GARDEN WALLS, ETC.

MODEL "T" S AND EARLY GM CARS EMBEDDED IN THE LOWER LEVELS OF THE WALL. THE STRUCTURE GETS LOWER TO

ADDITIONAL DEFINING ELEMENTS

HE LEFT AND RIGHT OF THE HIGH CENTER. TREE ROOTS AND OTHER MEANS OF EROSION HAVE DAMAGED SOME OF THE

ADDITIONAL DEFINING ELEMENTS

LOWER PARTS OF THE WALL, CAUSING AUTO PARTS TO COME LOOSE. MOST OF THE EJECTED PARTS HAVE BEEN STORED BY

ADDITIONAL DEFINING ELEMENTS

NEIGHBORS AND COULD BE REINSERTED IF THE WALL IS RESTORED.

ADDITIONAL DEFINING ELEMENTS

ADDITIONAL DEFINING ELEMENTS

ADDITIONAL DEFINING ELEMENTS

SECONDARY BUILDINGS CONSIST OF A PUBLIC WALKWAY IN THE STREET RIGHT OF WAY IS ABOVE THE WALL.

IDENTIFY GARAGE; GARDEN SHELTER, ETC.

SIGNIFICANT INTERIOR SPACES INCLUDE THERE ARE NO INTERIOR SPACES

IDENTIFY ORIGINAL FEATURES SUCH AS WOOD PANELING; MOLDINGS AND TRIM, SPECIAL GLASS WINDOWS,

ORNATE CEILINGS; PLASTER MOLDINGS; LIGHT FIXTURES; PAINTED DECORATION; CERAMIC TILE; STAIR BALUSTRADES; BUILT-IN FURNITURE, ETC.

IDENTIFY NOTABLE MATURE TREES AND SHRUBS

IDENTIFY NOTABLE MATURE TREES AND SHRUBS

HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT APPLICATION

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
SIGNIFICANCE WORK SHEET

TYPE OR HAND PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL BLOCK LETTERS

Complete One or Both of the Upper and Lower Portions of This Page

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

THE HERMON CAR WALL IS AN IMPORTANT EXAMPLE OF

NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT

FOLK ART

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE (SEE LINE B)

ARCHITECTURE

AND MEETS THE CULTURAL HERITAGE ORDINANCE BECAUSE OF THE HIGH QUALITY OF ITS DESIGN AND THE RETENTION OF ITS ORIGINAL FORM, DETAILING AND INTEGRITY.

AND/OR

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

THE HERMON CAR WALL WAS BUILT IN ROUGHLY BETWEEN 1932 AND 1941

NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT

YEAR BUILT

ALBERT EMANUEL SEDERQUIST

NAME OF FIRST OR OTHER SIGNIFICANT OWNER

WAS IMPORTANT TO THE

DEVELOPMENT OF LOS ANGELES BECAUSE THE WORK THAT HE CREATED CELEBRATES THE EARLY YEARS OF THE AMERICAN LOVE AFFAIR WITH THE AUTOMOBILE BY MEMORIALIZING THE VARIOUS PARTS OF CARS IN A GALLERY SETTING OF CONCRETE, BRICK AND STONE. IN A PRACTICAL SENSE, IT WAS A CREATIVE WAY OF DEALING WITH AUTO PARTS THAT WERE WORN OUT OR WERE NO LONGER CONSIDERED USABLE AS THE MACHINE ADVANCED IN TECHNOLOGY. SEDERQUIST OWNED ABOUT SIX CARS WHEN HE STARTED BUILDING THE WALL AND WORN OUT PARTS WERE AVAILABLE FOR THE WORK. WITH THE AID OF HIS THREE NEPHEWS, HE FIRST ABLE TO CONSTRUCT THE MAIN CENTRAL PART OF THE WALL AND FINISH THE EXTENSIONS OVER THE NEXT DECADE. IN A PRACTICAL SENSE, THE WALL HAS HELPED TO KEEP THE HILLSIDE FROM FALLING DOWN ON SEVERAL HOUSES THAT FACE AN ALLEY PARTIALLY LIES WITHIN THE PULLMAN STREET RIGHT OF WAY. IT DOES, HOWEVER, QUALIFY AS FOLK ART IN THE SAME MANNER AS SIMON RODIA'S "WATTS TOWERS" (HCM 15) OR DANIEL VAN METER'S "TOWER OF WOODEN PALLETS (HCM 184). THE WALL HAS BEEN KNOWN AND LOVED BY THE RESIDENTS OF THE HERMON COMMUNITY FOR MANY YEARS BUT IS NOW IN NEED OF A SUBSTANTIAL REPAIR PROJECT. BEING THAT THE WALL IS LOCATED ON CITY LAND, IT HAS BEEN THE DESIRE OF THE ARROYO SECO NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL THAT IT BE RECOGNIZED AND DESIGNATED A HISTORIC CULTURAL MONUMENT SO THAT THE WORK OF STABILIZING AND RESTORING THE WALL CAN THEN BE PROPERLY MONITORED BY THE OFFICE OF HISTORIC RESOURCES. ALBERT EMANUEL SEDERQUIST WAS BORN THE FAMILY FARM, IN PAGE COUNTY IOWA, ON NOVEMBER 6, 1889 TO FRANZ OTTO AND CARRIE L. (HART) SEDERQUIST, WHO WERE BOTH NATIVES OF SWEDEN. HIS MOTHER DIED BEFORE ALBERT REACHED THE AGE OF 10. YOUNG ALBERT LEFT THE FARM AND HE WORKED AS A HIRED FARM LABORER FOR A WHILE, AS HE ATTENDED IOWA STATE,

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
SIGNIFICANCE WORK SHEET
CONTINUED

UNIVERSITY. AFTER A YEAR IN THE ARMY, HE SETTLED IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, WHERE HE WORKED AS THE SECRETARY FOR THE PALESTINE PAGEANT COMPANY DURING WORLD WAR I. AFTER THE WAR, HE RELOCATED TO CHICAGO, WHERE HE FOUND WORK AS A SALESMAN WHILE HE STAYED AT THE YMCA. IN 1926 HE ARRIVED IN LOS ANGELES AND FOUND A ROOM AT A HOTEL AT 932½ S. MAIN STREET AND WENT TO WORK FOR THE CARMICHAEL TRAFFIC CORPORATION, A FREIGHT COMPANY ON MAIN STREET, WHERE HE WAS A CLERK HANDLING FREIGHT CLAIMS. IN 1932, SEDERQUIST BOUGHT LOTS 4 THROUGH 11 OF BLOCK 21 OF THE HIGHLAND PARK ADDITION, WHICH IS IN THE HERMON AREA, EAST OF BUSHNELL WAY, BETWEEN TERRILL AVENUE AND PULLMAN STREET, THE LATTER OF WHICH WAS THEN AND REMAINS UNIMPROVED OTHER THEN A PUBLIC WALKWAY. HE USED THE PROPERTY, WHICH HE REFERRED TO AS "THE DUGOUT", AS A PLACE FOR WEEKEND CAMPOUTS AND PICNICS. HE SOON BEGAN BUILDING THE CAR WALL AT THE REAR OF THE PROPERTY, IN THE PULLMAN RIGHT OF WAY. THE WALL WAS COMPLETED AROUND 1941 AND SEDERQUIST WAS TO RETAIN OWNERSHIP OF THE PROPERTY UNTIL HIS DEATH ON MAY 9, 1959. YEARS LATER, HIS NEPHEW, WALTER SEDERQUIST, OF MODESTO, CALIFORNIA, SUPPLIED INFORMATION AND SOME PHOTOS TO AN UNNAMED WRITER, WHO DOCUMENTED SEDERQUIST'S LIFE AND THE CAR WALL. THERE ARE A FEW MINOR DISCREPANCIES WITH THE DOCUMENTED RECORD, BUT IT APPEARS TO BE ESSENTIALLY ACCURATE. ONE DIFFERENCE WAS THAT THE LAND WAS NOT SOLD FOR TAXES AS STATED IN THE WRITE-UP. LYLE PETERS BOUGHT THE LAND FROM SEDERQUIST'S ESTATE ON MAY 25, 1960 AND BUILT SEVERAL HOUSES. HE RAN A DRIVEWAY UP FROM TERRILL TO THE PULLMAN RIGHT OF WAY TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE HOUSES. THE ALLEY HE BUILT IS PARTLY IN THE PULLMAN STREET RIGHT OF WAY AND PROVIDE EASY ACCESS TO VIEW THE CAR WALL. IN 2004, REV DAVID B. FENWICK WROTE AN ARTICLE ABOUT "HERMON'S HERMIT", WHERE HE TIED THE CAR WALL TO A MYSTERY MAN WHO SUPPOSEDLY HOMESTEADED SOME LAND IN WHAT IS NOW DEBS PARK. HE CREDITED THIS MAN FOR THE WALL. THIS WAS BEFORE THE EARLIER ARTICLE ON SEDERQUIST WAS FOUND. REV FENWICK MAY HAVE COMBINED SEDERQUIST, WHO HAS NOW BEEN DOCUMENTED AS THE WALLS CREATOR, WITH THIS OTHER MAN. THE STORIES DO HAVE SOME SIMILARITIES, BUT OFFICIAL RECORDS SHOW THE EARLIER WRITE-UP TO BE CLOSER TO THE TRUTH. BOTH STORIES ARE ATTACHED AS THEY PROVIDE A LOOK INTO AN INTERESTING, IF OBSCURE PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE HERMON COMMUNITY. THE CAR WALL IS THE TANGIBLE REMINDER OF THAT HISTORY AND IT'S PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION IS A HIGH PRIORITY FOR HERMON AS WELL AS THE OTHER COMMUNITIES ALONG THE ARROYO SECO, AS A CELEBRATION OF THE MANY ARTISTS WHO HAVE CALLED THE ARROYO SECO THEIR HOME FOR WELL OVER A CENTURY.



THE OLD WALLS ON THE HILL

The decorative walls above Terrill Avenue, Highland Park, were built by a man named Albert Emmanuel Sederquist. Born in Essex, Iowa, he was the youngest in a family of five children. He was an educated man and taught elementary school in Iowa for a time.

After moving to California around 1926, he lived at the Cadillac Hotel in downtown Los Angeles and worked for a Carmichael Traffic Corporation on Main Street, where he handled freight claims. He passed away in 1959.

Described as an "intellectual, eccentric bachelor", Mr. Sederquist owned quite a bit of property on the hill between Ernest Debs Park and Terrill Avenue, which he used for weekend campouts and picnics and called "the dugout". He had a passion for old cars and at one time owned six of them. Parts of old cars are embedded in some of the cement walls. Also, Mr. Sederquist apparently collected a great deal of what people call "junk"--which was carted away to the city dump when the property was sold.

During the Depression days of the early 1930's, Albert Sederquist paid his three young nephews, Fred, Harold and Walter Sederquist, a few cents an hour to help him start building the walls. Their initials can be seen outlined in rocks on one of the walls. All the work was done with simple hand tools. He continued the project by himself for another ten years, placing rocks collected on trips to Death Valley, etc., in the walls and writing inscriptions in the wet cement. The bricks apparently came from a school torn down after the Long Beach earthquake.

Other interesting bits of information about Mr. Sederquist are that he always wore white shirts--even when he worked on the walls--and that he was a photography buff. He had intended to leave his property to a group such as the Boy Scouts of America, but the land was taken to pay back taxes and sold to a developer.

Albert Sederquist and friend,
Aug. 9, 1936, He was 38 years
old at the time.



Albert Sederquist with more of his
stone and shell creations in 1940.

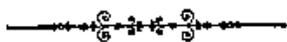
(Photographs and information were
supplied by Albert Sederquist's
nephew, Walter Sederquist of
Modesto, California.)



ous; they were, however, friendly and peaceable and frequently accepted his hospitality. His present farm consists of 120 acres, which he has placed under good cultivation. It is always a pleasure to record the history of those sturdy pioneers who have made the great West what it is to-day, a land of peace and plenty.

Mr. and Mrs. Palmer are both members of the Baptist Church. Mr. Palmer has been a deacon of the church since 1856, and he is a most devoted member. He has taken an active interest in educational matters and has served his district as school director. When a resident of Linn County the people attested their confidence in him by electing him to the office of Sheriff which he held four years. He has always been a man of high moral character, and has attempted to live a life according to the Golden Rule.

Elmira Palmer is the wife of Robert Ray, and the mother of seven children: Matthew married Ada M. Waits, and they have four children; Laura is the wife of Michael Delapant, and they have had born to them three children; Elzina married John Rush, and has two children; Emma J. is the wife of John Higginbotham, and two children have been born of this union; Ezra married Allie Wox.



FRANZ OTTO SEDERQUIST is one of the prominent farmers of Fremont Township, and one of the thrifty Swedish settlers who has made his way by his own untiring energy to a position of financial independence. He was born in Ostergotland, near the city of Skenninge, Sweden, December 3, 1846, and is a son of Gabriel Peterson; on learning his trade he changed his name from Peterson to Sederquist. Gabriel Peter-

son was a farmer by occupation, owning his own land, the place being called "Warpliden." He married Christiana Lawson, and to them were born six children: August, Clara M., Gustav A., deceased; Louisa C., Pher Anton, and Franz Otto. The parents were both devoted members of the Swedish Lutheran Church. The father died in Sweden, at the age of sixty-four years; his wife lived to the great age of eighty-five years.

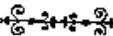
Franz Otto Sederquist, the son of Gabriel and Christiana (Lawson) Peterson, received a limited education in the common schools of his native land, and he learned the trades of painting and harness making. At the age of seventeen years he bade farewell to his native land and sailed away to America; he took passage on a sailing vessel, and was on the ocean nine weeks and three days; he landed in the city of Boston, and proceeded at once to Swedonia, Mercer County, Illinois. There he secured employment on a farm, but soon began working at his trade, painting in the summer, and making harness during the winter. He remained in Illinois until 1872, when he came to Montgomery County, Iowa; he purchased eighty acres of land which he cultivated two years.

Mr. Sederquist was united in marriage December 31, 1873, to Carrie L. Hart, a daughter of J. M. Hart, now a resident of Page County. Mr. Hart emigrated to America, from Stockaryd Smaland, with his family, in 1868, and settled at Andover, Illinois. His wife's maiden name was Annie Johnson, and they were both natives of Sweden. She died in 1875 at the age of sixty-five years. They were the parents of seven children: John deceased; Johanis, Swan, Carl, Matilda, Carrie L., and Louisa, deceased. The entire family came to America, and are now comfortably established on farms of their own.

Mr. and Mrs. Sederquist are the parents of

seven children: Albert W., who died at the age of six months; Emma L., Henry W., Huldah M., Annie A., Emelia Laura L., Carl A. and Albert E.

In 1875 our worth subject came to his present farm of 160 acres; it was then wild prairie, but he has changed the aspect of the surroundings, and everything bespeaks the thrift and prosperity characteristic of the Swedish farmer. As his means increased he invested in more land, until his farm now covers 240 acres. Both Mr. and Mrs. Sederquist are consistent members of the Missionary Evangelist Church, and take a deep interest in the cause of religion, contributing largely to the support of the church. Mr. Sederquist has represented the people of his township as school director and road supervisor, performing his duties to the satisfaction of all concerned, and sustaining his reputation as an honorable citizen.



GARRETT R. JONES, one of the substantial and reliable farmers of Pierce Township, next claims our attention in this record of Page County's leading citizens. His ancestors emigrated from Wales at an early day and settled in Pennsylvania. His great-grandfather, Isaiah Joel Jones, was one of a family of five children; one of his sisters married a Breckinridge, an ancestor of John C. Breckenridge, who was at one time a candidate for the presidency on the Democratic ticket, and a first cousin to the grandfather of our subject. Isaiah Joel Jones was a soldier in the Revolutionary war, in which he was wounded, carrying a bullet in his body all his life. In early day he removed to Steuben County, New York, where he was one of the pioneers. He reared a large family, the names of those remembered by the

present generation being Bascom, Isaiah, Robert L. H., Llewellyn, Ap Griffith, James, Polly, Jane and Julia A. The mother's maiden name was Jane Bascom. Mr. Jones was a man of considerable wealth, although he lost a great deal of money in his younger days. He was a successful hunter and very fond of the sport. His son Robert L. H. Jones, the grandfather of Garrett R., was born in Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, but removed to Steuben County, New York, where he reared his family; he married Jennie Crawford, and to them were born eleven children: Isaiah J., Llewellyn, Ap Griffith, Margaret A., Robert L. H., Charles, Priscilla, James, Jane, Melvina and Bascom. The father was a captain in the militia in the war of 1812, and stood ready to be called into service, but the summons never came; he lived many years in Steuben County, and when an old man, removed to Jay County, Indiana, in 1838; he bought a small farm but returned to New York many times. After the death of his wife he traveled about a great deal, visiting among his numerous children. He came to Iowa to visit his son Isaiah, at Franklin Grove, in 1876, and died there at the age of eighty-seven years. He was a zealous member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was a man of upright conduct. He had a fine constitution, his strength having been well developed in early life as a boatman on the Susquehanna River; he was also a pilot on that river. His son Isaiah, the father of Garrett R. Jones, married Annie S. Myers, in Pennsylvania; he was also a pilot on the Susquehanna; he removed to Indiana in 1844, where he lived ten years; he then went to Minnesota and bought a farm of 160 acres, on which he made his home until 1867; in that year he came to Page County, Iowa, passing the remainder of his days here. In 1876 he went to California, but returned at

The Mystery of Hermon's Hermit

By Rev. David B. Fenwick

Just east of the Via Marisol and Avenue 60 off ramps from the 110 Pasadena Freeway, is the little hill and valley community of Hermon in the City of Los Angeles.

Development began in this area in 1903 when a group of Free Methodist people settled in Hermon with a commitment to develop a church and college where Christian leaders could be trained. Their goals were more than fulfilled as hundreds of pastors, evangelists, missionaries and dedicated Christian lay persons were trained at Los Angeles Pacific College, then went out to serve throughout the world. L. A. P. C. eventually merged with Azusa Bible College, resulting in Azusa Pacific University. Pacific Christian High School continued at the original location until 2004. Hermon Community Church continues there after more than 100 years.

Some time between 1915 and 1925 a "mystery man" arrived at a very sparsely developed Hermon community. Since facts and rumors are scarce, the story is a mixture of fact, mystery and legend. Hopefully throughout the Hermon area there may be a few old timers who could fill in many more details, thus making the legend even more interesting.

This mystery man came from the east (perhaps St. Louis), arriving in his recent model automobile. In it he carried a few personal belongings and many rocks collected from special places along his journey west.

For reasons of his own, he did not purchase property readily available at that time in the Hermon valley. Was he too poor after his journey? Was he a nature lover and recluse? For whatever reasons, he chose to "homestead" a little shack along the northeastern edge of the hills in what is now, Debs Montecito Hills Park. Some masonry ruins of that shack can still be seen along a narrow trail. As a frequent hiker in the park since the mid 1970's, I have become quite interested in this story.

I believe there is some evidence that Hermon's mystery man was a nature lover and a recluse. In the 70's and 80's I used to see, near the ruins of the old shack, a large clump of nopal cactus with their prickly pear fruit (known as tunas in Spanish). Once in a while, near the patch of nopales, I would see a Mexican man with a machete. Little by little these delicacies vanished from that location. Debs park is an area which still supports abundant wild life. I believe Hermon's Hermit found much he could eat at that time in those hills: cactus, prickly pears,

mustard greens, rabbit meat, quail meat (the quails seem to have disappeared in recent years), perhaps raccoons, black walnuts, etc.

At some point, this Arroyo Recluse was no longer able to keep his car in repair, so he decided to memorialize it, along with the souvenir stones which he had collected on his journey west. He did this by creating a cement wall below the north edge of the highest part of the Pullman walkway between Monterey Road and Bushnell Way. It can be seen from the private drive branching off from the highest point on Terrill Ave. Hermon's Hermit imbedded the wheels, engine, and drive shaft parts of his car in this wall, but that was not all. He also placed many rocks of various colors in the wall. Some of these rocks had obviously been gathered on his journey west, because he scratched into the wall the locations where he had collected them.

Unfortunately there have been several mudslides from winter rains during the period from the mid 1990's until the heavy rains which fell during the winter of 2004. The wall created by Hermon's Hermit has been badly damaged. Most of the cement labels of his rock collection are now buried under dirt. Large hunks of wall are now in ruins, but the section, which holds the wheels and mechanical parts of his car, is still standing.

Will these relics soon disappear? There has been a question--does the damaged area belong to the city's right of way for the Pullman Ave. walkway? Are nearby neighbors responsible? Apparently it has now been settled. The wall is on city property. Will the city be willing to rebuild and reclaim this curious piece of history and fascinating legend? Among the "old timers" still living in the area, how much of the legend of Hermon's Hermit can still be pieced together in order to make this story even more interesting and complete? Only time will tell.

Hermon Car Wall Photographs



Hermon Car Wall, 400 Block of Pullman Avenue (Photograph by Charles J. Fisher)



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